

BOROUGH OF BLANDFORD FORUM .

Report of the Medical Officer of Health for the Year, 1947. .

The Minister of Health has directed that the Report for 1947 shall again be abbreviated and confined to information concerning essential and exceptional matters. Statistics are to be preserved but not included in the Report. The Minister desires it to include remarks on the progress of diphtheria immunisation, poliomyelitis, and certain particulars concerning the water supply. .

General Health Statistics. .

These indicate that the health of the population continued good during 1947. . The widespread epidemic of poliomyelitis which affected the whole Country in the latter half of the year caused 4 cases in Blandford but no deaths. . There was no other undue prevalence of infectious disease. .

There is a general impression that stomach and bowel disorders, causing short but inconvenient illnesses, were unduly prevalent, but no indication of this was to be found in the figures of notified diseases. . For instance there were no notifications of dysentery, food poisoning, or any of the enteric fevers, and only one death from infantile diarrhoea. .

The birth rate was even higher than the high figure recorded in 1946, being 25.5 per 1000 of population as compared with 24.0 in 1946 and a National birth rate of 20.5 for 1947. .

The death rate was 15.6 per 1000 as compared with 16.6 in 1946 and a National death rate of 12.0 for 1947. The diseases of old age accounted for the great majority of the deaths. .

Immunisation against Diphtheria. .

It is estimated that at the end of 1947 43.5 % of the child population aged 0 to 5 were immunised and 73.1 % of those aged 5 to 15. . These figures are somewhat lower than those of previous years and it is a fact that the response of parents to the immunisation campaign is not so good as it might be and not so good as it is in the surrounding rural areas. Nevertheless the effect of the immunisation carried on for the last eight years has been to reduce the incidence of diphtheria to vanishing point. The last case in the Borough was notified in 1944. .

Water Supply. .

In September 1947 the Borough Council exercised its option to purchase the water works hitherto belonging to the Blandford Water Works Company and the Town's water supply is now a municipal undertaking. .

The source is a chalk well which yields a very pure, if rather hard, water and has never failed to meet all requirements as regards quantity. .

Bacteriological examinations of the water going into supply have been made monthly, and of the raw water occasionally. Chemical analyses have been made quarterly. The results have been uniformly good. .

Though every house in the Town has a piped water within reach some of the older dwellings have no internal supply and depend on stand-pipes. 214 houses are so supplied, while 826 have water laid on internally. The actual number of people supplied in these two ways are 604 and 2760 respectively. .

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Medical Officer Of Health. .

